

**REMARKS**

In response to the Examiner's restriction requirement, Applicant hereby elects the invention of Group I (e.g., drawn to a light branching apparatus as defined by claims 1-8 and 17-18), without traverse. Applicant reserves the opportunity to file a Divisional Application for the non-elected invention later.

Further, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner's acknowledgment of the priority document filed on March 12, 2001.

Early, favorable prosecution on the merits is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

A conditional petition is made for any extension of time which may become necessary. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees for such extension and to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,



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